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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMEMBASSY, GUATEMALA — 369 DESP. NO.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON. October 29, 1953 DATE

REF :

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS
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	REC'D	OTHER

SUBJECT: Administration Parties and Anti-Communists Prepare for November Municipal Elections.

714.00/10-2953

The leftist parties supporting the Arbenz Administration and the anti-Communist opposition groups have recently been engaged in attempting to settle on candidates for the country-wide municipal elections which are scheduled to take place on the weekend of November 27-29, 1953, but they have thus far encountered the usual difficulties in forming a single Administration and a single Opposition slate in each locality. The municipal elections this year do not involve the mayoralty of Guatemala City, and represent more a minor test of the unity and organization of the contending parties than a yardstick of public attitude.

The Administration parties have had difficulties in obtaining agreement of united "National Democratic Front" slates. In early September, the Partido de la Revolución Guatemalteca (PRG), the Renovación Nacional (RN) and the Communist Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo (PGT) agreed to support Sr. Carlos CONTRERAS, a PGT member, in his campaign for Mayor of Jutiapa, but the Partido Acción Revolucionaria (PAR) which has previously been the leading party in that district did not join in. In the campaign to fill vacancies in the Quetzaltenango Municipal Council, the local PAR and PGT organizations agreed to cooperate, but the PRG and the RN refused to join in, reportedly because they did not wish to associate with the Communist PGT. The PRG's Diario del Pueblo on October 27 complained editorially that the strengthened "National Democratic Front" for which the PGT has appealed (Emb. Desp. 363, October 27) would be difficult to achieve because of this type of rivalry among local politicians.

The anti-Communist Opposition has made some progress towards establishing the principle of united action in the municipal elections. On October 27, they announced the formation of an "Anti-Communist Electoral Front" which would present a single ticket in the elections. It consisted of the Partido Unificación Anticomunista (PUA), the Partido Unificación Democrática

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(PUD), the Comité de Estudiantes Universitarios Anticomunistas (CEUA), the Comité Femenina Anticomunista affiliated with the CEUA, the Comité Nacional Central Femenino Anticomunista (CFA), and the Alianza Juvenil Anticomunista (AJA). However, the new front has not yet settled down to the practical business of naming specific candidates and it does not include the Partido Independiente Anticomunista de Occidente (PIACO) which is the leading Opposition party in the Quetzaltenango region. The PUA has alleged that the Opposition has met difficulties because the Civil Registrars in various localities have refused to register it for participation in the election.

It is doubtful at this stage whether the municipal elections will give any significant indication of sentiment towards the present Administration. It will be recalled that many of the leaders of the anti-Communist movement have gone into exile or been imprisoned since the Salamá uprising in March 1953, and the Opposition as a whole may be said to have given up any hopes of making their views prevail through elections.

For the Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

John Calvin Hill, Jr.
Second Secretary of Embassy